

# **Military Advice and Civil-Military Relations**

**A Monograph  
by  
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## Abstract

Military Advice and Civil-Military Relations by LTC Douglas W. Bennett, U.S. Army, 48 pages.

As the United States leads the world into the 21st Century, military leaders must gain and maintain the trust of the President and the Secretary of Defense by understanding and influencing the manifold variables that affect the civil-military relationship in order for their advice to be considered towards the goal of maximizing the security of the nation.

This monograph examined three of the variables that impact the civil-military relationship with regard to understanding how military advice is received by civilian leadership – combat military experience of civilian leaders, political expertise of military leaders, and service parochialism – and examined them in the context of the Vietnam War and Operation Iraqi Freedom. The lack military experience of civilian leaders did not detract from the military security of the nation with respect to operational combat, and by extension, from the health of civil-military relations. The conclusion about political expertise in military leaders is not as definitive and is dependant on the characterization of the conflict involved. Service parochialism is a factor of the civilian leaders' receptiveness to military advice. The military leaders need to be aware of this factor in order for their advice to be heard and considered in the formulation of national policy for military operations.

In the aggregate, politicians will only hear and listen to military leaders if several things manifest themselves simultaneously. First, regardless of the civilian leadership's experience in the military, the political administration must respect military culture as suggested by Herspring. Second, military leaders must have political experience to understand the ancillary functions of irregular warfare as recommended by Janowitz. Finally, there must exist a service culture that is divided enough to offer different opinions and alternatives, but not so divisive that it appears ineffectual and incoherent as indicated by Feaver.

## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Definitions .....	3
Variables .....	4
Military Experience of Civilian Leaders .....	4
Political Expertise of Military Leaders .....	5
Environment of Service Parochialism.....	5
Theory and Theorists.....	5
Samuel Huntington.....	7
Morris Janowitz .....	10
Elliot Cohen.....	13
Peter Feaver .....	14
Dale Herspring .....	16
Legal Precedence.....	17
The National Security Act of 1947 .....	17
Goldwater-Nichols Act 1986.....	18
Vietnam .....	20
Operation Iraqi Freedom.....	24
Conclusion .....	30
Further Research .....	33
Bibliography.....	34
Books .....	45
Periodicals .....	36
Government Sources .....	37
Papers .....	37
Internet Resources .....	37

## Introduction

Political scientist Samuel P. Huntington hints at the definition of civil-military relations as the relationship between the military leadership charged with protecting a society and the civilian leadership that is ultimately responsible for that security. The endstate of a civil-military relationship exists in one of three basic forms. First, the military can overthrow the civilian government resulting in any varying degrees of authoritarian/semi-authoritarian rule. On the other extreme, civilian leadership compels the military to completely adopt the social structure resulting in the inability for the military to provide for the defense of the country. In between, then, lays the balance of what civil-military relationship should be: to maintain the security of the nation without resulting in military control.

The conduct of a war is the business of the statesman; its fighting is that of the soldier. Colin Gray, professor of International Politics and Strategic Studies at the University of Reading, United Kingdom, marks this difference between warfare and war. Warfare is the violence inherent in armed conflict, as opposed to war, which is the management of that violence.<sup>1</sup> The question is where does one cease and the other begin? To what extent do strategy and politics relate to one another? When addressing the relation between politics and the Soldier, the French general and statesman Charles de Gaulle said, "It is not possible to lay down in advance, or even to define, such a system of checks and balances."<sup>2</sup> As will be noted later, one division between responsibilities is defined by military professionalism. A professional military is not inclined to intrude into politics, at least not in a democratic society. Strict adherence to military forces in their specialized roles implies confining politicians to theirs. However, that same professionalism also impels the military into politics. The undeniable nature of the military task compels the professional officer to occasionally encroach on foreign affairs and domestic matters that are traditionally restricted to the politician's purview.<sup>3</sup> Douglas Johnson and Steven Metz, from the Strategic Studies Institute, draw the linkage between the American public perception of civil-military relations and national security.

It might be possible to show that there is no fundamental normative difference between the military and civilians, or that civilian leaders do not always reflect public opinion better than military professionals. It might be possible to prove military involvement in policymaking does not necessarily lead to a greater

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<sup>1</sup> Colin S. Gray, *War, Peace and International Relations* (New York, New York: Routledge, 2007), 7.

<sup>2</sup> Charles de Gaulle, *The Edge of the Sword* (New York, New York: Criterion Books, 1960), 119.

<sup>3</sup> S. E. Finer, *The Man on Horseback: The Role of the Military in Politics* (New York, New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc, 1962), 207.

reliance on the military element of national power. But so long as most Americans believe these things and so long as the beliefs of the American public shape national policy, then civilian control of the military remains a vital national interest.<sup>4</sup>

History shows that American civil-military relations have run the gamut on effectiveness. Franklin Roosevelt enjoyed positive relations with the military despite not always agreeing with or taking their advice. FDR did not concur with the advice given during the beginning of World War II that the Allies should attack onto Europe's mainland at the first available moment. However, it was his willingness to listen to his advisors that gained for him the respect of the military. At the opposite end of the spectrum, President Bill Clinton faced discord with the military almost immediately upon taking the oath of office. His conflict with the military, specifically General Colin Powell, then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCSC), began over gays in the military on the fourth day of his presidency and never recovered. The most classic case of turbulent civil-military relations in the past half-century, however, was during the Lyndon Johnson administration and America's involvement in Vietnam. The Johnson administration created a rift in civil-military relations by conducting a war in which military advice was neither expected nor wanted. Nearly forty years later, similar turbulence in civil-military relations reappeared during the George W. Bush administration and the planning and execution of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). The Bush administration expected military advice, but worked to change that advice when it was not what it wanted to hear. One of the reasons for the contentiousness of the relationship is that the civilian leaders of late have chosen to ignore or marginalize the military leadership and the advice they have to offer.<sup>5</sup>

No relationship exists without effort being put into it by both parties. Similarly, the civil-military relationship has two sides, each having their own parts to play and responsibilities to uphold. For the military, public law in the form of the Goldwater-Nichols Act<sup>6</sup> requires them to inform the President, the National Security Council, or the Secretary of Defense of the range of military advice and opinions. The civilian requirement of this relationship is less clear as there is

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<sup>4</sup> Douglas V. Johnson and Steven Metz, *American Civil-Military Relations: New Issues, Enduring Problems* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 1995), 4.

<sup>5</sup> This is a common sentiment among the military. See Charles D. Allen and Breena E. Coates, "The Engagement of Military Voice," *Parameters* 39, no. 4 (Winter 09/10): 73-98; CMDR. Pat Paterson (RET.), "Limits to Civilian Authority?," *Armed Forces Journal*, September 2009, <http://www.afji.com/2009/09/4076851/> (accessed March 28, 2010).

<sup>6</sup> The Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 – short title is Goldwater-Nichols Act – increased jointness in the military and more fully defined the roles of the military and civilian leadership. See page 23 of this monograph for full explanation.



no legal requirement for civilian leadership to listen or hear military advice, no matter how sound and experienced it is. Certainly, civilian leaders can ignore their military advisors, as did President Johnson and Secretary of Defense McNamara in the 1960s, relying instead on the “Whiz Kids”<sup>7</sup> brought in by the Secretary of Defense to provide input for the conduct of the Vietnam War. Conversely, civilian leadership can place a great deal of confidence in military advice and give them enormous power in the conduct of the war as did President George H. W. Bush and Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney in the 1991 Desert Storm campaign against Iraq.

The feedback that the military gives to its civilian bosses is vital to shaping the ways and means that accomplish the ends established by the civilian leadership. The very capabilities of the military to accomplish the ways and means ultimately shape the ends which they are capable of accomplishing. It would seem unrealistic for a civilian leader to set out goals in a national security strategy that are completely unobtainable by the current military and then not resource that military better. The only way that the civilian leadership can understand the military capabilities and requirements is to listen, and hear, what their military advisors are telling them. As the United States leads the world into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, military leaders must gain and maintain the trust of the President and the Secretary of Defense by understanding and influencing the manifold variables that affect the civil-military relationship in order for their advice to be considered towards the goal of maximizing the security of the nation.

## Definitions

This monograph uses the terms military leaders and leadership and civilian leaders and leadership extensively. Military leadership is defined as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Combatant Commanders. The monograph acknowledges there are other military leaders that have influence in the community, and indeed, have some access to the formulation of policy regarding military matters. However, it is important to note that these identified leaders hold the dominant opinion and are the voice of the military to which civilian leaders respond. Similarly, civilian leadership is defined to include the President, the Secretary of Defense and Congress. These three bodies are the voices to which the military must respond by law and the Constitution, and are those considered when expressing “civilian” attitudes and opinions. Specifically though, Johnson and Metz conclude, “The interface between

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<sup>7</sup> McNamara used the Defense Reorganization Act of 1958 to expand the OSD staff structure. McNamara brought in an army of intelligencia who were like-minded men sharing a belief that military experience was flawed by the human condition and relied instead on quantitative analysis to provide advise on military matters. See H. R. McMaster, *Dereliction of Duty: Lyndon Johnson, Robert McNamara, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Lies That Led to Vietnam* (New York, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1997), pages 18 -20.

the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff is probably the single most important one in American civil-military relations. The Secretary of Defense provides the interface between civilians and military.”<sup>8</sup>

## **Variables**

This monograph looks at two timeframes during America’s history – Vietnam War (1965 – 1968) and the Iraq War (2003 – present) – in which the American military perceived that civilian leaders ignored its advice. In both of these instances, for a myriad of reasons, the advice of the military was not heard or was marginalized by either the President, the Secretary of Defense, or both. There are several variables that influenced the relative deafness of the civilian leadership during these two times of war. Of concern here is the extent of military service that resides in the civilian leadership, the military leader’s political experience, and the environment of service parochialism. It is acknowledged that in a system as large and complex as the United States Government, these variables are not alone, nor are they completely independent. However, the intent of this monograph is to look at these variables individually and their impact on the system, and possibly extrapolate how that understanding may help military leaders remain relevant in having their advice considered at the highest levels. These three variables are only a limited number of the factors that affect the receptiveness of military advice by civilian leaders. There are a number of others that bear scrutiny and are deserving of further research. One such factor is the cumulative affect of poor relations between presidential administrations and their military advisors. For example, a rift started between President Truman and the military over the firing of General Douglas MacArthur during the Korean conflict. That rift grew during the Eisenhower administration, began to tear with the election of President Kennedy and was completely dysfunctional during the Johnson administration. Understanding that this monograph will look at only three of the many variables possible, it is useful to define those variables.

## **Military Experience of Civilian Leaders**

When examining the military experience of the President and the Secretary of Defense, this monograph considers the amount of duty a politician has in combat action. The limitation to combat action speaks directly to the purpose for this study. It is assumed that the amount of experience and first hand knowledge in combat action influences the level of politicians’ involvement in operational-level matters.

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<sup>8</sup> Johnson and Metz, *American Civil-Military Relations*, 18.

## Political Expertise of Military Leaders

Measuring the amount of political expertise that military leaders have is much more subjective. Most military leaders at the highest levels spend at least some time in billets that expose them to the political environment in Washington D.C., however they develop different levels of political acumen from that exposure.

## Environment of Service Parochialism

Service parochialism is the conduct of the separate services that advance their interests ahead of the interests of sister services. The underpinning of service parochialism is the tension between being responsive to political objectives as established by the civilian leadership and maintaining service legitimacy and relevance.<sup>9</sup> Remaining independent and relevant requires the services to develop strategies that justify their existence in terms of national policy. Reduction in funding serves to exacerbate the issue of interservice rivalry due to the competition of limited resources.<sup>10</sup>

## Theory and Theorists

Any discussion of civil-military relations theory should begin at the roots of the intersection between why men are sent to war, and what men are sent to war. The master on this subject is German military philosopher Carl von Clausewitz. Clausewitz believed war was an extension of policy and, in fact, subordinate to it. As he stated in his seminal work, *On War*, "Subordinating the political point of view to the military would be absurd, for it is policy that has created war. Policy is the guiding intelligence and war only the instrument, not vice versa."<sup>11</sup> The will of the military is thus subordinated to the will of the politician. The degree of subordination between the military and the civilian leadership depends on the nature of the war itself and the nature of the society it serves. In a total war, the military will have a freer hand in the conduct of the conflict. In limited war, the political aspects of the conflict and war termination increase in

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<sup>9</sup> Carl H. Builder, *The Masks of war: American Military Styles in Strategy and Analysis* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 63. Builder explains service legitimacy as the confidence of the service in its rightful independent status and relevancy as the pertinence of its missions and capabilities.

<sup>10</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *The Common Defense: Strategic Programs in National Politics* (New York, New York: Columbia University Press, 1961). See page 407 for services justifying their existence and page 417 for the discussion on limited resources.

<sup>11</sup> Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (New York, New York: Everyman's Library, 1993), 733.

importance and thus the military's freedom of action is more limited.<sup>12</sup> In giving military advice, however, Clausewitz indicates that it is not sensible to summon soldiers and ask them for "purely military advice"<sup>13</sup> Colin Gray captures this tension in *Strategy for Chaos* as "the dialogue... between the realms of policy and military power often evades empirical disentanglement."<sup>14</sup>

During Clausewitz' time, the thought that a single person was capable of grasping the concepts of both soldier and statesman was not out of consideration. In the mid-18th century, Frederick the Great was undoubtedly among the world's most successful military generals. However, he was also a statesman of notable prowess. The J.E. Wallace Sterling Professor of Humanities Emeritus at Stanford University, Gordon Craig, said, "It was not the battles won by Frederick the Great that made him a great general, but rather his political acumen and conformity of his strategy with political reality."<sup>15</sup> Likewise, during the early nineteenth century, Napoleon was both Emperor and Field Marshal. He was able to conduct warfare that was militarily profound, while simultaneously achieving political objectives.<sup>16</sup> However, in the modern world, the technology of the forces, skills of the soldier, and intricacies of political discourse have made the professions too complex to be mastered by any one individual. In a democratic society, the two occupations must reside in separate individuals; the relationship of civilians to military leaders requires formalized structure.

This monograph will look in detail at the theories of Samuel Huntington, Morris Janowitz, Elliot Cohen, Peter Feaver and Dale Herspring to analyze military behavior toward influencing national policy in operational situations and its implications.

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<sup>12</sup> Gordon A. Craig, "Delbrück: The Military Historian," in *Makers of Modern Strategy: from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, ed. Peter Paret, 326-353 (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1986), 346.

<sup>13</sup> Clausewitz, *On War*, 734. Italics original.

<sup>14</sup> Colin S. Gray, *Strategy for Chaos: Revolutions in Military Affairs and the Evidence of History* (Portland, OR: Frans Cass Publishers, 2002), 97.

<sup>15</sup> Craig, Delbrück, 343.

<sup>16</sup> Charles Josselyn, *The True Napoleon: A Cyclopedia of Events in His Life* (New York, New York: R.H. Russell, 1902), 206. Josselyn says "[Napoleon] was equal to Ceasar as a warrior, to Bacon in political sagacity, and above all other kings in genius." For a contemporary insight to Napoleon's political accuman during his military victories, see Robert M. Epstein, *Napoleon's Last Victory and the Emergence of Modern War* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1994).

## Samuel Huntington

The most influential American civil-military theorist of modern times is Samuel P. Huntington with his treatise *The Soldier and the State* published in 1957. Huntington was the director of the John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies and Chairman of the Harvard Academy for International and Area Studies. Professor Huntington was also co-editor of *Foreign Policy*, and president of the American Political association.<sup>17</sup> Huntington's theory of civil-military relations hinges on maintaining a professional officer corps to keep the military subjugated to the civilian leadership.

According to Samuel P. Huntington's seminal work, *The Soldier and the State*, the objective of healthy civil-military relations on the institutional level is to "develop a system of civil-military relations which will maximize military security at the least sacrifice of other social values. Nations which develop a properly balanced pattern of civil-military relations have a great advantage in the search for security."<sup>18</sup> On one hand, the military institution which reflects solely the social values of the state it is sworn to protect may be incapable of performing that security function effectively based on their inability to divorce themselves from the "social forces, ideologies, and institutions dominant within the society."<sup>19</sup> On the other hand, if left to purely functional imperatives, the military may be uncontrollable by society, leaving that society vulnerable to an internal threat of military coup.

While Huntington's theory addresses the extreme cases of function and dysfunction in civil-military relations, healthy civil-military relations are more than just protecting the state from dissolution of sovereignty and preventing a coup. There are many shades of gray between these two extremes, and for American civil-military relations, neither extreme of the spectrum has seriously been contemplated since shortly after the Revolutionary War. For the benefits of healthy civil-military relations to be fully enjoyed, a hierarchy must exist between the participants. Huntington makes the required structure clear by saying "the area of military science is subordinate to, and yet independent of, the area of politics. Just as war serves the ends of politics, the military profession serves the ends of the state."<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996), bookflap.

<sup>18</sup> The section explaining Huntington's theory on civil-military relations is taken from Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State - The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (New York, New York: Vintage Books, 1957).

<sup>19</sup> Huntington, *Soldier and the State*, 2.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 76.

More importantly, if more subtly, unhealthy civil-military relations also have an effect on the state along a continuum of degrees. Huntington says, "Nations that fail to develop a balanced pattern of civil-military relations squander their resources and run uncalculated risks."<sup>21</sup> Although the military is largely unconcerned with political goals per-se, they are specifically concerned with the relationship between political goals, and the means by which to meet those goals. If the politician over-commits the military capabilities, he places national security at risk. However, the security of the nation is of primary concern to the politician, and it is ultimately his decision that must be followed. If the statesman decides on a commitment that the military knows will result in disaster, the military is obligated to raise their objection, and then, if not heard, be professional and make the best of a bad situation. In the case where a statesman issues a decree that is legally questionable, it is incumbent on the military to appeal to the judiciary system, and then abide by the decision rendered. When a politician seeks to enforce a decision that is morally incongruent with society, Huntington says that the statesman and the military officer are equally capable to discern right from wrong, and leaves it to the military man's judgment if the action is so egregious as to constitute reason for disobedience.<sup>22</sup>

The key mechanism around which Huntington's theory on civil-military relations revolves is the idea of professionalization of the military, the focus of which is bound by the relationship of the officer corps and the state. Huntington states, "the distinguishing characteristics of a profession as a special type of vocation are its expertise, responsibility, and corporateness."<sup>23</sup> A professional is an expert who performs a service essential to the functioning of society, and applies professional competence and conduct with a sense of social responsibility. When applied to the military, "the professional officer does not modify his behavior within his profession based on economic rewards and punishments. The officer is not a mercenary who transfers his services wherever they are best rewarded,"<sup>24</sup> but offers his services to his country with a sense of patriotism which serves as his primary motivation.

Huntington parses civilian control of the military into two possibilities; objective control and subjective control. "Civilian control in the objective sense is the maximizing of military professionalism. More precisely, it is that distribution of political power between military and civilian groups which is most conducive to the emergence of professional attitudes and behavior

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 77-78.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 15.

among the members of the officer corps.”<sup>25</sup> Under objective control, there are three basic responsibilities of the military. First, to express to the polity their opinion on those measures necessary to preserve the security of the state. Second, the military advises the polity on courses of action being considered by the state, from a military perspective. Lastly, the military executes state decisions with regard to national security as directed by the polity “even if it is a decision which runs violently counter to ... military judgment.”<sup>26</sup> Objective control recognizes the autonomous nature of the military and the logical conclusion that the military and political spheres are separate. By its very nature, military participation in politics is contrary to objective control: “civilian control decreases as the military become progressively involved in institutional, class, and constitutional politics.”<sup>27</sup> Objective civilian control reduces military power to the point where professionalism of the military is maximized, and no lower. Any further reduction in military power weakens the security of the state; any allowance of greater military power weakens civilian control.

In contrast to objective civilian control, Huntington’s idea of subjective civilian control over the military puts national security at risk due to the military being used as a lever for one civilian group to gain power over all other rivals. Subjective civilian control and military security of the nation are mutually exclusive because the military serves as a political tool to the exclusion of its primary duty to protect the nation. Greater national security threats intensify military imperatives against which it becomes more difficult to assert civilian control. Conversely, efforts to enhance civilian control in the subjective sense often undermine military security.<sup>28</sup> Huntington cautions that in the absence of a professional military, subjective civilian control is the only control possible over the military.

In an effort to maintain the security of the state, which both civilian and military leaders have sworn to protect, their relative spheres of competence are bound to come into contact, and occasionally even clash. When currying domestic favor and in times of low security threat, politicians often will promise cuts in military budgets while simultaneously “pursuing an adventurous foreign policy.”<sup>29</sup> The military is opposed to both propositions. However, Huntington warns “Politics is beyond the scope of military competence, and the participation of military officers in politics undermines their professionalism, curtailing their professional

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 83.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 72.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 83.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 84-85.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 70.

competence, dividing the profession against itself, and substituting extraneous values for professional values.”<sup>30</sup> In a democracy, the decisions made by the politician must be followed by the military, because to do otherwise places the security of the state in jeopardy by subjugating the will of those elected by the people to the will of the military.

## **Morris Janowitz**

Morris Janowitz, a contemporary of Huntington and noted sociologist, served as chairman of the sociology department for the University of Chicago and founded the Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society.<sup>31</sup> Janowitz produced a theory based on the United States using nuclear weapons to meet any existential threat, but he notes that the “tempo of limited warfare, irregular warfare, and armed revolutionary uprisings in politically unstable areas has been intense.”<sup>32</sup> These two facts correlate in his mind to the necessity of the U.S. military transforming into a constabulary force in which it would be well-positioned and trained to meet the continuum of emerging requirements because of the unlikelihood of a nuclear clash.

Morris Janowitz notes in his influential work on civil-military relations, *The Professional Soldier*, that a critical turning point in civil-military relations began during World War II. The career experiences and military indoctrination at all levels coupled with the requirements of national economic mobilization deepened the political awareness of the military establishment. As officers rose in rank, their ability to remain oblivious to political issues was dramatically reduced. Consequently, awareness of political issues required a greater degree of contact with civilian leaders and society as a whole. Prior to World War II, professional officers were prepared to conduct war because it was an honorable way of life, and little was required of him in the way of political expertise. The subsequent increase in interaction between civilians and military men, coupled with recruiting diversification, transformed the political attitudes and social tendencies of the military to align closer to that of the larger society. As it became more socially representative, the officer corps found itself confronted with an increased number of quasi-military and political administrative tasks requiring it to engage in dialogues on policy in order to complete its missions. The military establishment became a multipurpose entity in which it was required to assume ancillary functions such as military assistance programs,

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 71.

<sup>31</sup> Glen Folwer, “Prof. Morris Janowitz Dead at 69; Specialized on Military in Society”, *The New York Times*, 8 November 1988. (on-line at <http://www.nytimes.com/1988/11/08/obituaries>), accessed 31 January 2010.

<sup>32</sup> Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait* (New York, New York: The Free Press, 1971), 417.



political propaganda, and police functions in addition to its fundamental function of national security.<sup>33</sup>

As the military grappled with its diversifying roles, two schools of thought on the use of military forces to achieve political goals became evident. The “absolute” school of thought contended that warfare was the most elementary foundation of international relations. Victory was the mechanism from which political objectives were obtained, hence logically, the more complete the victory, the more decisive the achievement of political aims. Janowitz surmises the absolute school of thought as, “In short, there is no substitute for ‘total victory.’”<sup>34</sup> The second school of thought was one of pragmatism. Subscribers to the pragmatic school of thought considered warfare only one of the multiple instruments affecting international relations. Political objectives were obtained by adjusting the use or threat of use of violence to the desired outcomes. Janowitz encapsulates the pragmatic use of force as, “To use too much or too little is self-defeating.”<sup>35</sup>

Janowitz divides military leaders into two distinct categories; heroic types and managerial types. He describes heroic type as those embodying traditional fame and glory exemplified by George Patton, “Bull” Halsey, James Doolittle and Curtis LaMay. They were perpetual warrior types who “embodied the martial spirit and the theme of personal valor.” In contrast, he describes leaders that were managerial types like Dwight Eisenhower, Omar Bradley, William Leahy, and Ernest King. These men were concerned with the rational conduct of war, and “reflected the technical and pragmatic dimensions of war-making.”<sup>36</sup>

Janowitz observes that the evidence indicates that both the absolutists and the pragmatists over-emphasize the potentials of force, but he goes on to indicate his own bias of pragmatism by noting that the “realistic study of international relations involves an appreciation of the limits of violence.”<sup>37</sup> He also notes that both absolutists and pragmatists rely on the notion that national security depends on developing and maintaining an effective, long-range delivery system of nuclear weapons.

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid. See page 235 for details on the social alignment of the military establishment, page 277 regarding professional officers conducting war only because it was an honorable way of life, and page 303 for Janowitz treatment of quasi-military tasks required of a constabulary force.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 264.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid. See page 21 for definitions of heroic and managerial military men, and page 154 for his examples.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 429.

The pressure of the two differing concepts of the use of military power created a dichotomy in the military establishment. Janowitz notes that while the military posture during the 1950-1960s became more absolutist, there was extensive criticism by pragmatic military leaders of the absolutist frame of thinking. However, the military becoming more pragmatic required that they accept the ancillary functions society foisted upon them, which they are now inclined to accept anyway, and move toward a constabulary force concept.

Janowitz states, as a conclusion, that in the future, military officers must be prepared to contend with three dilemmas. First, they must strive for a balance between conventional and atomic weapons. Second, they must be prepared to assist in estimating the consequences of the threat or use of force with the potential of persuasion and conflict termination. Third, military leaders must transform the military into a force that is capable of participation in political and administrative functions of arms control and inspection.

To meet these emerging requirements, Janowitz proposes the concept of a constabulary force, which he notes, is in keeping with traditionally historic uses of the military and acknowledges the role of the military in nation-building. He argues, "the constabulary concept provides a continuity with past military experiences and traditions, but it also offers a basis for the radical adaptation of the profession."<sup>38</sup> The constabulary force concept consists of the full range of the military establishment. That range of capabilities encompasses weapons of mass destruction to operations in guerilla and counter-guerilla warfare. The constabulary force also contains flexible and specialized capacities, including the specialists in military aid programs and in paramilitary operations. Janowitz delineates that a military becomes a constabulary force "when it is continuously prepared to act, committed to the minimum use of force, and seeks viable international relations, rather than victory." In essence, a constabulary force is fundamentally grounded in a pragmatic frame of thought.<sup>39</sup>

Because a constabulary force officer is attuned to withstand the pressures inherent in the constabulary mission, he is responsive to the political and social requirements made by the environment on the military establishment relating to international relations. This sensitivity manifests itself in his subjection to civilian control, not only because the law requires it, but also because of tradition, self-imposed professional standards, and integration with social standards with which he has already aligned himself.

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 418.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid. Janowitz addresses the concept of the constabulary force conducting full spectrum operations specifically including the range from weapons of mass destruction to those of flexible and specialized capacity, 418.

Janowitz also cautions that without the full establishment of a constabulary force, the civilian leadership is required to consider military definitions of international relations. In his view, the risks that come with the military management of strategic deterrence and limited war are calculated quite differently than those involving conflict resolution, nuclear test suspension, and arms inspection. His unspoken assumption is that the risk assessment for both elements of national security put the military in conflict with itself until the constabulary force is firmly established.

## Elliot Cohen

Where Huntington and Janowitz address civil-military relations in times of peace with a view toward the conduct of war, Elliot Cohen, Professor of Strategic Studies at Johns Hopkins University, writes about civil-military relations during wartime and expands his theory into peacetime. In his influential work, *Supreme Command*, Cohen examines the ever-malleable line that divides the sphere of the military from the sphere of the politician. Huntington indicated that there was a line that must be maintained in order for the competence of both politician and military officer to be maximized which Cohen labels as the “normal” theory of civil-military relations. Cohen repudiates Huntington’s “normal” theory of civil-military relations by saying that “the ‘normal’ theory goes awry in its insistence on a *principled*, as opposed to a *prudential* basis for civilian restraint in interrogating, probing, and even in extremis, dictating military action.”<sup>40</sup>

Elliot Cohen looks at civil-military relationships through the lens of four civilian leaders while their respective countries were at war.<sup>41</sup> He posits that the dynamics of interpersonal relationships change as politicians get involved during times of conflict. Cohen lays the responsibility of learning the military business of war at the feet of the politicians, which they can gain through prodigious study and the aide of a skilled assistant to translate political wishes into directives and orders.<sup>42</sup> He also notes that modern civil-military command systems do not allow for such an assistant role in a formal manner, saying that the assistant role and the CJCS position are necessarily in tension because of conflicts of interest. One possible critique of Cohen’s theory is that each of the civilians he examines was an elected leader of a country that faced an existential threat. Cohen then extrapolates his findings implicitly into an environment

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<sup>40</sup> Eliot A. Cohen, *Supreme Command: Soldiers Statesmen, and Leadership in Wartime* (New York, New York: Ancho Book, 2002), 13. Italics original.

<sup>41</sup> In *Supreme Command*, Cohen examines the wartime leadership of Abraham Lincoln, Georges Clemenceau, Winston Churchill, and David Ben-Gurion.

<sup>42</sup> Cohen, *Supreme Command*, 214.

of civil-military relations that does not require the country to be on a wartime footing. He subsequently concludes that the proper roles of the military in shaping foreign policy, setting the conditions under which it acts, creating the kind of forces most appropriate for its tasks, and mobilizing civil society to support its activities are all contentious issues.<sup>43</sup> Cohen's solution advocates that the politician engage in an unequal dialogue with their military leaders. An unequal dialogue is one in which both sides express their views bluntly, sometimes offensively, and repeatedly, but in the end, the final authority rests with the statesman.<sup>44</sup>

Cohen's ultimate conclusion is the demarcation between the military and the civilian leadership is not a clearly defined line that separates the responsibilities and roles for each side. Cohen insists that civilian leaders must meddle into the affairs of the military from the strategic down to, if necessary, the tactical level, to insure political objectives are accomplished. The civilian leadership must own the war they have because war is not an extension of policy as Clausewitz advocates, but war is policy and must be expressed by those responsible for it.

### **Peter Feaver**

An even more recent academic to posit a new theory on civil-military relations is Peter D. Feaver, an associate professor of political science at Duke University and director of the Triangle Institute for Security Studies. Feaver's work, *Armed Servants*, takes a new approach to examining the relationship between the military and their civilian bosses. His theory is based on principle-agency theory, a methodology developed by economists to examine the agency problem of employer-employee relationships. Principle-agency theory concerns itself with selection and behavior of an agent with regards to the desires of the controlling principle. Feaver uses this construct to develop his "agency theory" as it applies to civil-military relations.<sup>45</sup>

Feaver's work on civil-military relations is the latest development in the theoretical construction of the subject since Huntington in 1957. Feaver states, "The civil military challenge is to reconcile a military strong enough to do anything the civilians ask with a military subordinate enough to do only what the civilians authorize."<sup>46</sup> He concludes that civil-military relations are important in a democracy because "coercive power often gives the holder the capability to enforce its will on the community that created it. A direct seizure of political power

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 242.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 209.

<sup>45</sup> Peter D. Feaver, *Armed Servants: Agency, Oversight, and Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), Ch 3 describes the relevant parts of the principle-agent theory as it applies to CMR.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 2.

by the military is the traditional worry of civil-military relations theory and has been a consistent pattern in human history”<sup>47</sup> as it has been seen repeatedly in Central and South America. It is the management of coercive power that is the focus of healthy civil-military relations, that those who are empowered to govern a state not become despotism to that state. What is at stake is the sovereignty of the state when both the military and the civilian leadership judge what is best for national security. Either can be correct, but it is the civilian that must have the final say.

Feaver’s argument is fundamentally flawed in that he assumes the military has a natural predilection for misbehaving, that is, doing what they want in a manner they want versus what the civilian leadership wants. In his introduction, he states that, given no other inputs to the system, the military will shirk its duties and do what ever it wants.<sup>48</sup> He goes on to imply that the military, once established, will not do those tasks for which it was intended without monitoring, and if necessary, punishment for malfeasance.

The pessimistic view of human nature forms the basis of the three key tenants of Feaver’s agency theory as it applies to the civil-military relationship. First, the military will ‘shirk’ as long as they are not monitored by the polity. Second, that the military will work better when the aims of the military and civilians converge. Lastly, that the military will work despite not being monitored if they think they will be punished if they get caught shirking.

Feaver defines shirking as any behavior that is not in accordance with the civilian leader’s intent or not executing that intent to the civilian’s satisfaction. More specifically, shirking is doing something the way the military wants to do it, rather than according to the wishes of their civilian bosses. Imbedded in the definition of shirking is the military’s conduct toward a goal it does not believe in only so far as to not incur punishment by the civilians. Naturally, working is the opposite of shirking. Feaver defines working broadly to mean doing something to the satisfaction of the principle. In other words, working is the action taken by the agent that the principle would take if he were to do the job.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>48</sup> Feaver, *Armed Servants*, 3.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 60. “Shirking and working are multidimensional concepts, consisting of both functional and relational components and reflecting the multidimensional and possibly divergent preferences of the civilian principal and the military agent. The agent is said to work perfectly when it does what it has contracted with the principal to do, how the principal has asked it to, with due diligence and skill, and in such a way as to reinforce the principal’s superior role in making the decisions and drawing the lines of any delegation. The military agent is said to shirk when, whether through laziness, insolence, or preventable incompetence, it deviates from its agreement with the civilians in order to pursue different preferences, for instance by not doing what the civilians have requested, or not in the way the civilians wanted, or in such a way as to undermine the ability of the civilians to make future decisions.”

## Dale Herspring

A contemporary of Feaver is civil-military theorist Dale R. Herspring, distinguished professor of the Political Science Department at Kansas State University. Herspring's theory expands on Feaver's relationship principle and explains civil-military relations in terms of culture and understanding of culture between civilian and military leaders. Herspring's base assumption is that the military is no longer apolitical and that the "military is now a bureaucratic interest group much like others in Washington."<sup>50</sup>

Herspring concentrates his theory of civil-military relations on the micro-level or narrow view of why conflict between senior military leaders and political officials is "intense on some occasions, while mild on others."<sup>51</sup> His argument is that the ferocity of the battles between leaders hinges primarily on service or military culture and the understanding, or lack thereof, by civilian statesmen. Herspring's focus on civil-military relations during combat operations using the criteria of "The Use of Force." He divides this into four issues: Clear Chain of Command, Clear and Unambiguous Guidance, Strategic Decision Making, and Operational and Tactical Autonomy.<sup>52</sup>

The vantage point from which Herspring makes his observations is looking at civil-military relations from the military's perspective. Herspring spent thirty-two years in the Navy and Naval Reserve with additional experience as a Department of State foreign service officer in Washington D.C. Military leaders will not blindly acquiesce if the President proposes a strategy contrary to one they believe is most appropriate for carrying out the mission. Herspring contends that the existence of an apolitical military is an illusion. By his definition, political action is "the struggle for resources, autonomy, and influence in Washington" and conflict between politicians and the military is thus inevitable. Herspring's reasoning for the inevitability of conflict stems from the Constitutionally mandated bifurcation of political masters for the military; the Congress who is responsible for funding and the President who is responsible for direction. His contention is that the conflict can be lessened or heightened depending on presidential leadership style and how it aligns with and respects military/service culture.<sup>53</sup>

Like Cohen, Herspring advocates that the dividing line between civilian and military leaders is not fixed, and that there are neither purely military issues nor purely civilian issues regarding

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<sup>50</sup> Dale R. Herspring, *The Pentagon and the Presidency: Civil-Military Relations from FDR to George W. Bush* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2005), 1.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 7.

national security. “Expecting the military to remain solely on the implementation side of the process makes no more sense than expecting civilians to remain solely on the formulation side of the process.”<sup>54</sup> The ambiguous nature of the demarcation line of power between the military and the civilian leadership prompted Congress to enact legislation with the intention of smoothing the process.

## Legal Precedence

Prior to World War II, the binding legal document controlling the relationship of the civilian leadership and the military was the Constitution. During the two world wars, the solidification of a professional military strained the legal understanding of civil-military relations, but it was the advent of nuclear weapons that forced the issue of defining what civil-military relations must become. Nuclear weapons were too powerful to be left solely in the hands of the military, but being weapons, they should not be in the hands of the civilians either. In an effort to solve this dilemma, Congress passed the National Security Act of 1947.

### The National Security Act of 1947

The National Security Act of 1947 (amended in 1949 and again in 1958) attempted to unify the military component of national security under a single civilian leader at the cabinet level. It established the Department of Defense and named the Secretary of Defense as its head. The Secretary’s primary task was to coordinate the separate services in matters of national defense and military policy. As a link between the services and the Secretary, the amended act formally established the Joint Chiefs of Staff,<sup>55</sup> but was ambiguous about the role they were to play in formulation of national policy.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>55</sup> The Joint Chiefs of Staff originated as an informal body design to be the U.S. representatives to the British formed combined Chiefs of Staff during World War II. The JCS, initially consisted of the Army Chief of Staff, the Commanding General of the Army Air Forces, and the Chief of Naval Operations, assumed responsibility for military operations, and became strategic and coordination advisors for President Roosevelt. The JCS operated under presidential authority and without formal charter throughout World War II. See Lawrence J. Korb, *The Joint Chiefs of Staff* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1976).

<sup>56</sup> U.S. Code Title 50, Chapter 15, Section 401. Congressional Declaration of Purpose. In enacting this legislation, it is the intent of Congress to provide a comprehensive program for the future security of the United States; to provide for the establishment of integrated policies and procedures for the departments, agencies, and functions of the Government relating to the national security; to provide a Department of Defense, including the three military Departments of the Army, the Navy (including naval aviation and the United States Marine Corps), and the Air Force under the direction, authority, and control of the Secretary of Defense; to provide that each military department shall be separately

## Goldwater-Nichols Act 1986

The Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, or Goldwater-Nichols Act, was an outcome of the failure of Vietnam, the failure of Operation Eagle Claw,<sup>57</sup> and the failure in the military acquisition process.<sup>58</sup> The bill had three main focuses: a) to strengthen civilian authority over the Department of Defense, b) to improve military advice, and c) to establish combatant commands in the field.<sup>59</sup> Specifically, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was designated as the principle military advisor to the President, National Security Council

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organized under its own Secretary and shall function under the direction, authority, and control of the Secretary of Defense; to provide for their unified direction under civilian control of the Secretary of Defense but not to merge these departments or services; to provide for the establishment of unified or specified combatant commands, and a clear and direct line of command to such commands; to eliminate unnecessary duplication in the Department of Defense, and particularly in the field of research and engineering by vesting its overall direction and control in the Secretary of Defense; to provide more effective, efficient, and economical administration in the Department of Defense; to provide for the unified strategic direction of the combatant forces, for their operation under unified command, and for their integration into an efficient team of land, naval, and air forces but not to establish a single Chief of Staff over the armed forces nor an overall armed forces general staff.

<sup>57</sup> Operation Eagle Claw was a disjointed effort by all of the services, mounted to rescue fifty-three hostages from Iran in 1980. The mission was characterized as a debacle, killing eight servicemen and wounding five others. The crux of the failure was violation of unity of command with representatives from Delta Force, U.S. Army Special Operations, Navy, Air Force, CIA, and others working without a single chain of command. See William C. Flynt, *Broken Stiletto: Command and Control of the Joint Task Force During Operations Eagle Claw at Desert One*, SAMS Monograph, School of Advanced Military Studies (Leavenworth : CGSC, 1995); James H. Kyle, *The Guts to Try* (New York, New York: Orion Books, 1990).

<sup>58</sup> Daniel Wirls' article in "Armed Forces & Society" chronicles military reform starting in the early 1980's and culminates in the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Act. The Packard Commission, a Presidential Blue Ribbon Commission on Defense Management, recommended the establishment of a procurement czar in order to force managerial solutions on the defense acquisition process. The recommendation was placed into legislation by the Goldwater-Nichols Act. Daniel Wirls, "Congress and the Politics of Military Reform," *Armed Forces & Society*, Summer 1991: 487-512.

<sup>59</sup> U.S. Congress, "Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986," Public Law 99-433 (October 1, 99th Congress). The introduction of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 says the aim of the bill is "[t]o reorganize the Department of Defense and strengthen civilian authority in the Department of Defense, to improve the military advice provided to the President, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense, to place clear responsibility on the commanders of the unified and specified combatant commands for the accomplishment of missions assigned to those commands and ensure that the authority of those commanders is fully commensurate with that responsibility, to increase attention to the formulation of strategy and to contingency planning, to provide for more efficient use of defense resources, to improve joint officer management policies, otherwise to enhance the effectiveness of military operations and improve the management and administration of the Department of Defense, and for other purposes."



and the Secretary of Defense. He was to give advice pertaining to military matters upon request of the principles and at his discretion. While the Chairman was the principle advisor, the legislation also clearly defined the roles of the other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Upon request, "members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, individually or collectively, in their capacity as military advisors, shall provide advice to the President, the National Security Council, or the Secretary of Defense on a particular matter when [they] request such advice."<sup>60</sup> Additionally, the Act gave members of the Joint Chief of Staff, with due notification to the Secretary of Defense, the authority to "make such recommendations to Congress relating to the Department of Defense as he considers appropriate."<sup>61</sup>

The Act also prescribed the functions for the Chairman as planning, advice, and policy formulation. He was directly responsible for strategic direction of the armed forces, strategic planning conforming to projected resource levels, contingency planning, and advice on requirements, programs and budgets. He was tasked with advising the Secretary of Defense on the extent to which program recommendations and budget proposals conform with the priorities established by strategic plans and requirements of the combatant commanders. Thus the Goldwater-Nichols Act ensured that the military had a voice in the formulation of policy at the strategic level. The beneficial impact of the Goldwater-Nichols Act largely depends on which of the theorists most closely describes civil-military relations in the period in question.

Cohen and Feaver, however, contend that the Goldwater-Nichols Act damaged civil-military relations. For Cohen, the Act gave the CJCS too much power. He attributes, at least in part, the ability of General Colin Powell to preempt most attempts of civilian control in the Gulf war on the Act.<sup>62</sup> Feaver also uses Powell as an example of the negative impact of the Goldwater-Nichols Act by stating that Powell's efforts to thwart limited air attacks in Bosnia amounted to shirking, but went unpunished, partially because of the newly-enacted legislation.<sup>63</sup>

Conversely, the theories of Herspring, Huntington, and Janowitz contend that the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act was a positive influence on civil-military relations. For Herspring, the Goldwater-Nichols legislation opened lines of communication between the military and both the Secretary of Defense and the President. It gave a clear understanding of the chain of command between the civilians and the Combatant Commanders, compelled the President to provide an

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<sup>60</sup> U.S. Congress, "Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986," *Public Law 99-433* (October 1, 99th Congress), §151, (e).

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid*, §151 (f).

<sup>62</sup> Cohen, *Supreme Command*, 189.

<sup>63</sup> Feaver, *Armed Servants*, 209.

annual report on national security strategy, and required the Secretary of Defense to provide written policy guidance for the review of contingency plans.<sup>64</sup> For the theories of Huntington and Janowitz, Goldwater-Nichols drew the military into a more monolithic, joint organization, which was consistent with Janowitz concept of a constabulary force and Huntington's professional military.

The Goldwater-Nichols Act permitted greater transparency for civilian leaders to understand military contingency plans. Prior to the Act, civilian leaders, with the exception of the Secretary of Defense, were not privy to wartime contingency plans in order to prevent meddling in operational affairs.<sup>65</sup>

## Vietnam

As previously indicated, military professionals have held political intrusions into operational affairs in contempt. Relations between the Pentagon and the White House during the Vietnam era were no exception. General David Petraeus said in his doctoral thesis, "The military had traditionally viewed military policy and operations as their institutional property. The invasion of their domain in the early 1960s by what many perceived to be misguided amateurs and transient meddlers was resisted."<sup>66</sup> Strategic guidance during the Vietnam era suffered on a multitude of levels. President Johnson was fearful of losing the 1964 election and viewed the war in Vietnam as an added impediment to his election chances. His fear could have stemmed from the psychological bludgeoning he took during his 1941 defeat to secure a Texas senate seat. After that loss, Johnson applied for and was given a commission in the Naval Reserves. It was his belief that a favorable war record would aid in future attempts at positions of influence in the government.<sup>67</sup> As a sitting member of the House of Representatives, he was given an appointment as a lieutenant commander even though he had no preparations for combat and had once even told a friend that he "had not trained a day to qualify for [the commission]."<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Herspring, *The Pentagon and the Presidency*, 293-294.

<sup>65</sup> James R. III Locher, *Victory on the Potomac* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2002), 442.

<sup>66</sup> David H. Petraeus, "The American Military and the Lessons of Vietnam" (Ph D. diss.: Princeton University, 1987), 119.

<sup>67</sup> Irwin Unger and Debi Unger, *LBJ: A Life* (New York, New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1999), 108.

<sup>68</sup> Robert Dallek, *Lyndon B. Johnson: Portrait of a President* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 48.

His assignment during the war consisted of acting as President Roosevelt's directed telescope and inspecting troop conditions in the Southwest Pacific. During his inspection tour, Johnson arranged to participate in a combat mission, an air raid on Japanese bases in Rabaul on New Britain Island. The mission was a dangerous one, and damage from Japanese fighter planes forced Johnson's plane to return to base without completing the bombing mission. Once on the ground, General MacArthur gave Johnson a Silver Star medal, the only person on the mission to receive that award, and sent him back to Washington complete with a war record and a combat decoration.<sup>69</sup>

However, during Vietnam, Johnson's primary focus was on his domestic agenda and his need to be reelected in order to push his "Great Society" through Congress. As a result, he turned over the strategy of the Vietnam War to his Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara had no combat experience. His military experience consisted of three years during World War II teaching and using statistical analysis in the Army Air Force Office of Statistical Control to streamline American air power all over the world.<sup>70</sup> McNamara's military experience colored his view of military operations and how strategy was formed.

McNamara's strategy for Vietnam was the concept of graduated pressure. It was also based on decisions made in the wake of stunning successes in the Cuban Missile Crisis. In that crisis, the U.S. threat of stepping up military responses caused Soviet leadership to eventually back down from escalation. Unfortunately, the context of the conflict in Vietnam was dramatically different and the strategy used by the insurgents was fundamentally different than those of one of the world's superpowers.

McNamara's strategy was void of military input. Mark Perry notes that McNamara had inherited a "military establishment that was a disorganized confederation of ossified service bureaucracies locked in a debilitating competition with each other for more money, bigger weapons, and greater influence."<sup>71</sup> In McNamara's view, the military's complicity in the failure of the Bay of Pigs,<sup>72</sup> followed by the success of the Cuban Missile Crisis without military input,

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 48-51.

<sup>70</sup> H. R. McMaster, *Dereliction of Duty: Lyndon Johnson, Robert McNamara, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Lies That Led to Vietnam* (New York, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1997), 326; Robert S. McNamara, *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam* (New York, New York: Times Books, 1995), 8-9.

<sup>71</sup> Mark Perry, *Four Stars* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1989), 97.

<sup>72</sup> The Bay of Pigs was a Central Intelligence Agency operation planned during the Eisenhower administration designed to overthrow the Cuban government of Fidel Castro. Not being involved in the planning, the military inadvertently learned about the operation after the beginning phases were already

engendered a continuation of policy formulation without contribution from the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Consequently, McNamara and Johnson assumed the role of tacticians in the prosecution of the war instead of leaving it to military experts trained in the management of violence. The Office of Secretary of Defense created directives for front line forces that dictated targets to be struck, the weather criteria for launch, and in some cases, even the minimal level of training for pilots conducting the mission.<sup>73</sup> During the battle of Khe Sanh, President Johnson spent much of his time in the Situation Room monitoring the battle. At one point, he shouted at the CJCS regarding the lack of ammunition getting through for the defense of the base,<sup>74</sup> highlighting Johnson's overt tactical focus in Vietnam.

Since the U.S. national strategy was fundamentally flawed, so too was the U.S. military strategy. General William Westmoreland, Commander of U.S. forces in Vietnam, adopted a military strategy of "search and destroy" to wear down his adversary to the point of capitulation. Westmoreland ignored the lack of success in search and destroy missions and maintained that the Vietnam War was a war of movement, analogous to the American Civil War instead of accepting that it was a war of revolution. Westmoreland was a military commander in search of a decisive battle using firepower and maneuver to meet the enemy in direct combat and destroy him.

Westmoreland was a combat leader whose primary experience was leading troops in conventional operations. He had held two regimental commands, one of which was in combat in Korea, commanded the XVIII Airborne Corps and later, commanded Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) in Vietnam. Westmoreland's experience in the political realm, however, was minimal. He briefly served at the Pentagon as the Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1, for Manpower Control and then as the Secretary of the General Staff under Army Chief of Staff, General Maxwell Taylor.<sup>75</sup> While both of these jobs carried a certain amount of power, neither put Westmoreland in the circle to influence, or be influenced, by civilian politicians. The

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underway. Days after President Kennedy took the oath of office, he asked the JCS to review the entire CIA plan. The JCS reported in a highly classified report that the plan was based on several questionable assumptions, but that the chances for success were "fair" if the assumptions were validated. The JCS' approval of the plan was less than enthusiastic and was based on the mistaken impression that President Kennedy had already ratified the operation. See Perry, *Four Stars*; Lawrence J. Korb, *The Joint Chiefs of Staff* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1976).

<sup>73</sup> Martin van Creveld, *Command in War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), 244.

<sup>74</sup> Perry, *Four Stars*, 280.

<sup>75</sup> Samuel Zaffiri, *Westmoreland: A Biography of General William C. Westmoreland* (New York, New York: William Morrow and Co, 1994), 86-87. See also Ernest B. Furgurson, *Westmoreland: The Inevitable General* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Co, 1968), ch 13.

tactically focused notion of decisive combat was reinforced by the “win” in the 1965 battles of the Ia Drang Valley which was attributed to fewer numbers of American troops but with superior firepower over a numerically superior foe with inferior technology. Westmoreland’s extensive combat leadership background, coupled with minimal political experience, contributed to his failing to understand the political consequences of his strategy in Vietnam because he viewed the war as the White House did: as a military contest, not a political one.<sup>76</sup>

Johnson and McNamara had little military experience so they reverted to what Cohen called the “normal” theory of civil-military relations. The civilians in charge during the Vietnam War instructed the military to win, but gave them little guidance as to what that meant, save to do what was best for Saigon. The effect of little military experience resulted in the Johnson administration’s inability to articulate operational linkages to policy that the military needed. The administration effectively had no idea of the military’s requirements with which to form a strategic or operational plan that was congruent with political aims. Because there was no operational linkage, the administration soon began intruding on military prerogatives by choosing and approving individual military targets. While Feaver commends monitoring of the military, the effect of monitoring without the requisite expertise eroded civil-military relations. For Cohen, it was not a matter of Johnson’s lack of military expertise, but the fact that he was a poor manager of men. Cohen contends that Lincoln had no military experience at the beginning of the Civil War, but he managed difficult men exceptionally well, even those who were politically obtuse.

Westmoreland may not have been politically obtuse, but he was also not politically adept. He did not express his views of the political situation to the polity and specifically denied it was within his sphere of influence to do so. While Huntington’s theory commends the separation of military leaders in politics, Janowitz’ theory of constabulary force contends that it would have been better had Westmoreland been politically astute. Only with a solid foundation in political understanding would Westmoreland have been able to comprehend the ancillary functions of providing security for the populace, police functions, and assistance programs that he needed to incorporate into his strategic plan for Vietnam. In Feaver’s theory, any context where the aims of the military and the political leaders converge, there is greater probability of the military working instead of shirking. The logical conclusion is that civilian experience in the military and military experience in politics are both desirable. Paradoxically, Feaver says in *Armed Servants* that the military worked in almost all cases during the Vietnam War despite any of the civilian

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<sup>76</sup> Jeffrey Record, *Beating Goliath: Why Insurgencies Win* (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, Inc., 2009), 6.

leadership positions having little military experience.<sup>77</sup> Neither Westmoreland nor Wheeler was initially a political expert. Westmoreland never becomes politically adroit even after his post-Vietnam assignment as CJCS. Wheeler, however, evolved into an adept political officer and is one of the unsung heroes of that era for his political ability.

The fight between the military services during the Vietnam War worked against them having a unified voice in the formulation of policy. Huntington advocates this as effective strategic pluralism working to enhance the military security of the United States. Cohen also praises the plurality of voices in the military. He finds fault with the administration's choice of Taylor and Wheeler in the JCS; both were pliable men that were unwilling or unable give real alternatives or were too desirous of consensus to offer sharp choices for the polity to make.<sup>78</sup> Feaver also endorses the concept that a divided military agent, weaker with respect to the civilian principle, strengthens civil-military relations. He contends that throughout the Vietnam conflict, the military did what it was told to do, or worked, despite the misgivings it had about the strategy being employed. In contrast, Janowitz' theory calls for a unified service to conduct constabulary missions; which would reduce redundancy among the services and further support full spectrum operations. In Vietnam, the services were unable to present a consolidated plan or concept for victory. Even after Johnson was open to the employment of large ground forces, the JCS could not decide on how to conduct the operations.<sup>79</sup> This indecision contributed to the cultural divide between the military and the civilians that Herspring warns to be detrimental to civil-military relations.

## Operation Iraqi Freedom

Unlike the situation in Vietnam, the passing of the Goldwater-Nichols Act in 1986 gave the military reason to believe it now had a voice in national policy formulation on military affairs. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell was the first to wield this new power and was very influential with Defense Secretary Dick Cheney during the Gulf War in 1991 regarding troop strengths, military strategy, and war termination.<sup>80</sup> However, in 2001, President Bush's Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, would be less swayed by military advice than his predecessors.

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<sup>77</sup> Feaver, *Armed Servants*, 172.

<sup>78</sup> Cohen, *Supreme Command*, 180.

<sup>79</sup> Herspring, *The Pentagon and the Presidency*, 167.

<sup>80</sup> James Mann, *Rise if the Vulcans: The History of Bush's War Cabinet* (New York, New York: Viking Penguin, 2004), 186-191.

Rumsfeld was commissioned as a naval aviator ensign after graduating from Princeton. He attended flight school in Pensacola, Florida and was at the top of his class. Despite his stated preferences for fighter training, the Navy assigned him to fly seaplanes. Rumsfeld's ego and temperament were insulted by the slight and he chose to leave the service after completing his initial tour.<sup>81</sup> Though he would consistently be drawn to fill his staff with personnel that had an affiliation with the Navy, his mistrust of military decision-making, and of the Army as an organization, remained during his tenure as Secretary of Defense. For example, in the first meeting between Rumsfeld and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Army General Hugh Shelton walked away with the distinct impression that Rumsfeld had little trust or confidence in the military. Rumsfeld told the JCS in "the tank" that he did not have very much use for the JCS as a body. Rumsfeld found the JCS overly inclined to back one another. "There was a reluctance to speak out on anything other than their own service...if a broad subject came up that involved one service, then the other three services would not opine too much – at least not opine in any way against what that service chief was proposing."<sup>82</sup> In relation to the planning and execution of the war in Iraq, this outlook would relegate the CJCS and his staff to little more than spectators. Rumsfeld characterized the military's view of "test-before-buying" approach to transformation as antiquated legacy thinking. The small-force victory in Afghanistan prompted him to view a similar concept for Iraq and compel, forcefully if necessary, transformation on the Army and its host of over-regimented officers.<sup>83</sup> Large ground forces did not factor into the type of future systems that Rumsfeld envisioned for the military. His new strategy sought to eliminate two Army divisions, three Air Force Wings, and a Navy carrier battle group. His new strategy reduced the Cold War requirement to fight and win two regional wars simultaneously instead focusing on winning on one front and not losing on the other. He also envisioned building a military that could fight small-scale wars in limited numbers.<sup>84</sup>

Rumsfeld's forceful transformation of the Army into the shape and role that he desired began almost simultaneously with the initial planning of the Iraqi war. Not afraid of digging into details, Rumsfeld burrowed deeply into the operational, and even tactical, level planning for the invasion of Iraq. At an initial briefing on the required force levels, Rumsfeld told the Central

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<sup>81</sup> Bradley Graham, *By His Own Rules: The Ambitions, Successes, and Ultimate Failures of Donald Rumsfeld* (New York, New York: PublicAffairs, 2009), 39.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid. See page 207 for Rumsfeld's exchange with General Shelton and page 246 for his thoughts on "the tank."

<sup>83</sup> Michael R. Gordon and General Bernard E. Trainor, *Cobra II: The Inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq* (New York, New York: Pantheon Books, 2006), 5, 53.

<sup>84</sup> Graham, *By His Own Rules*, 243- 244.

Command (CENTCOM) Commander, General Tommy Franks, that there were too many forces in his plan. Franks had worked on this particular plan as the Third Army Commander under General Anthony Zinni, Franks' predecessor as CENTCOM commander. Franks had drawn up the force requirements and then validated the 1003-98<sup>85</sup> plan using computerized war games. Zinni recalls that "[Franks] was a major contributor to the force levels and the planning and everything else. ... He and his staff seemed to be committed to the plan."<sup>86</sup>

Despite Franks' familiarity with the troop level requirements, Rumsfeld relentlessly scoured the troop requests. He wanted to eliminate excess inventory at all costs, with an eye to off-ramping units even before they became engaged in the battle if at all possible.<sup>87</sup> Though it manifested itself in a different manner, the micromanagement of the troop strengths harkened back to Johnson's troop increases during the Vietnam War. Rumsfeld thought the Time Phase Force Deployment List (TPFDL)<sup>88</sup> was an antiquated process: an anachronism that took decision making out of his hands. By removing the TPFDL process, the decisions for which units were going, when they went, and whether they were deemed unnecessary once the war was underway, all remained under his scrutiny. Rumsfeld ultimately did not trust the generals to send only those forces that were minimally necessary to win the war and the peace.<sup>89</sup> His belief that the operation could be done with a smaller, lighter force was based on the lessons from the invasion of Afghanistan. In that conflict, precision guided weapons and unmanned aerial drones combined to produce a lethal force that did not require large numbers of forces on the ground.<sup>90</sup>

Rumsfeld's micromanagement of force levels reminded Franks of his lieutenant days in Vietnam. He recalled in his memoirs that McNamara and his Whiz Kids had repeatedly picked

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<sup>85</sup> OPLAN 1003-98 was the prewar plan developed in CENTCOM in 1998. The OPLAN was based on the contingency that the United States was compelled into another conflict with Iraq post Desert Storm. See Nora Bensahel, et al., *After Saddam: Prewar Planning and the Occupation of Iraq* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2008), 6.

<sup>86</sup> Gordon and Trainor, *Cobra II*, 27.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 95.

<sup>88</sup> The Time Phase Force Deployment List (TPFDL) is a meticulously thought out procedure for deploying units to a theater of combat. The TPFDL dictates which units will arrive, in what order, by which method of conveyance. The intent of the TPFDL is to ensure that the combat, combat service, and combat service support capabilities are available to the Combatant Commander when they are required to execute the planned mission. See Joint Publication 5.0, *Joint Operation Planning*.

<sup>89</sup> Gordon and Trainor, *Cobra II*, 99.

<sup>90</sup> Bob Woodward, *Plan of Attack* (New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004), 41.



bombing targets in North Vietnam, and he vowed that this was not going to happen to him in Iraq.<sup>91</sup> Franks' relationship with the Secretary of Defense right after 9/11 was thus a stormy one, as he fought micromanagement from the top. At one point, Franks and Rumsfeld argued over their respective roles for the conduct of planning the war, but once those were defined – Rumsfeld dictated, Franks complied – they worked well together. That did not keep Franks from hedging his bets on keeping civilian leadership out of operational details. On the eve of the war, Franks sent a note telling Paul Wolfowitz, Rumsfeld's deputy, to "Keep Washington focused on policy and strategy. *Leave me the hell alone to run the war.*" Franks also indicated that he did not want the service chiefs at his daily VTC updates to the Secretary of Defense because he felt the JCS were of no value added to the operations in Iraq.<sup>92</sup>

However, Franks was not a political general. He was quoted many times as "I have a war to fight."<sup>93</sup> Franks was a former artillery officer and a muddy-boots type general, of whom Bernard Trainor and several historians have said "nobody could confuse him with an intellectual."<sup>94</sup> Being a war-fighter did not keep him from at least identifying tasks that were above his level, even if he had little idea of how to accomplish them. During a briefing in late December 2001, Franks briefed the President on the planning progress for the war in Iraq. In the briefing, one of the assumption slides showed that Franks assumed that "The Department of State would promote creation of a broad-based, credible provisional government as had been done in Afghanistan through the Bonn Conference earlier in the month. State would have to engage the United Nations or other countries to do this. The military did not do nation building very well, Franks said."<sup>95</sup>

One of the most concerned about the Phase IV, or nation building, planning was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Air Force General Richard Myers. He had trouble trying to get Franks and his planners to deeply consider Phase IV during any of their initial planning. The most he had seen in any of the briefings on the war effort was a vague wide arrow on a briefing chart for the final phase with no assigned dates or duration. However, Rumsfeld was more interested in the combat phases of the operation and Myers' concerns were left unheard.

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<sup>91</sup> Tommy Franks, *American Soldier* (New York, New York: Regan Books, 2004), 441.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 440, emphasis in original.

<sup>93</sup> Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, 413. See also Franks, *American Soldier*.

<sup>94</sup> Gordon and Trainor, *Cobra II*, 24. See also Stephen C. Pelletière, *Losing Iraq* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2007) for general characterization of Franks.

<sup>95</sup> Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, 101.

The Goldwater-Nichols Act gives the CJCS the responsibility of advising, among others, the President of the United States. During the planning of OIF, Rumsfeld took that task on himself and cut out the military voice. Rumsfeld was the only individual on the war planning staff that regularly spoke to Bush.<sup>96</sup> Additionally, communications between the military and civilian sides of the Pentagon were broken. The Joint Staff, three and four star generals, were afraid of Rumsfeld and his staff, to the point of not wanting to be perceived as meddling with Franks' war plan.<sup>97</sup> Retired General Norman Schwarzkopf thought "that Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, Feith, and their subordinates lacked the experience or knowledge to make sound military judgments by themselves and were ignoring the better informed advice of senior generals."<sup>98</sup> The consternation that developed over the Iraq War also drove the Deputy Chief of Operations for the JCS to retirement. In October 2002, Marine Lt. Gen. Newbold quietly left the military having opposed the invasion of Iraq inside the JCS community, but not publically. Ricks points out "his is the only known departure from the senior ranks of the military over the looming Iraq war."<sup>99</sup>

During OIF, Rumsfeld carried forward preconceived notions from his limited military experience. His brief stint with the Navy taught him to question everything, including the overall sagacity of the military as a bureaucratic organization. The doubt he carried manifested itself through his disregard for the autonomous nature of the military required by Huntington's theory, but supported Feaver's intrusive monitoring and large expectations of punishment for shirking. In Cohen's view, Rumsfeld was not militarily scarred by the Vietnam War, so he brought a perspective to transformation that was healthy for civil-military relations. However, once planning for the war began in earnest, Rumsfeld's absolutist focus on defeating the enemy in the beginning phases of the war blinded him to the post-hostilities requirement of stabilizing Iraq. In contrast to his fellow theorists, Herspring dismisses the concept that civilian military experience as a factor in understanding military culture. His examples are Roosevelt, Reagan, Bush (the younger) and Clinton who had little or no military experience and had mixed results in their relationships with the JCS. He also highlights Eisenhower and Carter, both who had extensive experiences in the military, and both had conflict with the military. Herspring surmises, "In short, prior military service is not a useful predictor of how well a President will relate to the Chiefs."<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 287.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 322.

<sup>98</sup> Thomas E. Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq* (New York, New York: The Penguin Press, 2006), 83.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 67.

<sup>100</sup> Herspring, *Pentagon and the Presidency*, 425.

However, Herspring's theory does indicate that political experience in the military leaders will ease conflict between them and the civilian leadership in the long run. He notes that military leaders will often be involved in the formulation of policy, and indeed, "the result will be a greater understanding of the policy that is to be implemented."<sup>101</sup> Franks had little input to the policy of the war on Iraq. President Bush never asked Franks whether America should go to war with Iraq and Franks never offered an opinion on the matter.<sup>102</sup> While there was a certain dialogue between the two, more often it was a dialogue between Franks and Rumsfeld. However, even Rumsfeld never asked Franks his opinion on policy matters. Because Huntington condemns the encroachment of the military on the political sphere, he would have approved of the distance Franks kept from political matters even if a greater political acumen might have caused him to shirk during the operation. Franks political distance, coupled with Rumsfeld's intrusive monitoring meets Feaver's agency theory with approval. Prior to Rumsfeld's meddling, Franks had planned for a much larger ground force than was ultimately approved, showing a pragmatic ideology toward warfighting. Unfortunately, his subsequent interaction with the Secretary of Defense changed his views toward a more absolutist frame of reference, causing him to lose sight of the ancillary roles required for stabilizing Iraq after the cessation of hostilities.

Service parochialism was not much of an issue during OIF as Franks insisted that they fight with a joint force. Still, there were enough tensions in interservice rivalry to examine it from a theoretical perspective. Feaver's theory indicates that service parochialism leads to working amongst the various services. His logic is that interservice rivalry allows opportunity for civilian leaders to offer "side payments" to those senior officers that are preoccupied with advancing their own service interests.<sup>103</sup> It also allows civilian leaders to promote those officers that concur with the civilian leadership views or deny promotion to those that do not concur. Rumsfeld's promotion of Air Force General Myers and the maltreatment of Army General Shinseki exemplify such side payments and punishments. In a similar construct, Herspring concludes that service parochialism allows civilian leaders to "divide and conquer" the services and play them off of each other.<sup>104</sup> During OIF, the military viewed Rumsfeld as a common enemy, resulting in the active-duty military banding together to limit parochialism. Though Cohen does not directly address service parochialism in his theory, his premise is that any factor that serves to detract from the President's overarching plan should be eliminated. Despite Huntington's

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<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>102</sup> Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, 251.

<sup>103</sup> Feaver, *Armed Servants*, 176.

<sup>104</sup> Herspring, *Pentagon and the Presidency*, 14.

admonishment against strategic monism, Cohen praises Rumsfeld for appointing a CJCS and Vice CJCS that not only refrain from being distractions, but that served as a pliable backdrop to his efforts and made no decisions that countered Rumsfeld's designs.

## **Conclusion**

The essence of a healthy civil-military relationship is maintaining the security of a nation without allowing the military to take control of that nation. If the military is to protect the nation, then national leaders must understand the capabilities of the institution in order to employ it to the maximum benefit to the nation. Key to that understanding is listening to, and hearing, the advice of the experts in the management of violence. The Goldwater-Nichols Act mandated that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was the principle advisor to the government on military matters, but it did not dictate that the political leaders actually take his advice nor even listen to his opinion. Logic would indicate that not considering the advice of military experts is detrimental to national security.

The information the military supplies to the civilian leadership is important to shaping the military capabilities pursuant to aims established by the civilian leadership. For operations that involve the application of force, that advice is vital and is in the national interest for civilian leaders to consider. As the United States leads the world into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, military leaders must gain and maintain the trust of the President and the Secretary of Defense in order for their advice to be considered towards the goal of maximizing the security of the nation.

This monograph looked at three of the variables that impact the civil-military relationship – combat military experience of civilian leaders, political expertise of military leaders, and service parochialism – and examined them in the context of the Vietnam War and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Before evaluating the variables, it is important to look at the character of the two wars. Vietnam was an insurgency from the outset, despite only belatedly being recognized as such. OIF can be characterized as a short period of high intensity combat, followed by an “unexpected” insurgency.

In these two conflicts, the lack of military experience in civilian leaders did not detract from the military security of the nation with respect to operational combat, and by extension, from the health of civil-military relations. In the cases reviewed here, neither Presidents Johnson nor Bush had any significant military experience. During the administration of the Vietnam War, Johnson chose to delve deeply into the tactical planning and operations of the war, though he did not involve himself much in the operational or strategic levels. Bush, however, divorced himself from tactical planning and decisions but chose to stay well informed in the operational and strategic decision-making, even preempting decisions on those levels when he saw the need. Hence, with a similar lack of military background, the two leaders approached the conduct of combat operations differently, but ultimately with similar results.

Similarly, the two Secretaries of Defense had no combat military experience, yet both men involved themselves deeply in the tactical planning. For example, McNamara commonly chose individual bombing targets, whereas Rumsfeld regularly chose individual units, to the company

level in some cases, that would deploy in support of the combat phase of the conflict. The high intensity phase of OIF was a stunning success implying that Rumsfeld's methods worked; however, the counterinsurgency effort in both Vietnam and Iraq, at least initially, were failures implying failure on the parts of both men. The conclusion is that Huntington was correct in saying that political leaders should avoid intruding into matters they know little about, as opposed to Cohen's thesis that politicians have a right and an obligation to meddle into military affairs; however, military experience in political leaders is not germane to knowing how far civilian leaders should delve into those affairs.

The conclusion about political expertise in military leaders is not as definitive as the previous section. Neither of the field commanders, General Westmoreland nor General Franks, had a great deal of political expertise. Both men had spent only short periods of time in Washington, but neither had been placed in positions requiring extensive political skills to do their jobs. Both field commanders were comfortable with combat operations and the tactical level of war, but neither was adept with the nuances of stability operations, or those tasks required to build a nation and keep it from crumbling from within. Like his political leaders, Westmoreland failed to understand that the Vietnam War was an insurgency from the beginning. His focus on search and destroy missions failed to provide any of the ancillary functions Janowitz claims are necessary during stability type operations. As a result of Westmoreland's failure to recognize or provide stability functions in Vietnam, the armed forces in Vietnam were applying violence inappropriately to accomplish the political aim.

During OIF, Franks' focus on combat operations and the taking of Baghdad by force made that portion of the operation a success by almost any standard. Feaver's theory predicts that Franks would work without the burdensome distraction of political acumen, and during the high intensity phase of the operation, that appears to be true. However, his aggregate failure to anticipate an insurgent environment and adapt his planning accordingly was rooted in his inexperience of the politics required to administer a country.

Service parochialism is a factor of a civilian leaders' receptiveness to military advice of which military leaders must be cognizant. Moreover, it is one factor they can directly affect. During the Vietnam War, the services were severely divided which damaged their credibility with the Johnson administration, and therefore hurt their ability to advise the President. When Johnson started seriously considering ground force insertion into Vietnam, the JCS became paralyzed by indecision on how to use those forces. They simply could not gain consensus on a plan, which further confirmed the already poor opinions that both Johnson and McNamara held of the military. In OIF, the services were largely unified as a result of two factors. First, many of the military leaders had some experience in Vietnam, and understood the impact of a divided military. None of the senior leadership wanted to repeat the mistakes that had been made during that time. Second, the passing of the Goldwater-Nichols Act in 1986 served as a Congressional intrusion to military affairs that forced jointness among the services. Cohen indicates that the Goldwater-Nichols Act hurt civilian control over the military and uses Colin Powell's abuse of his position to influence politics as an example. Cohen claims that Powell's

voice was the only one that the polity heard regarding Desert Storm, Bosnia, and other military matters and it carried too much sway. In Vietnam, Cohen faults the civilian leadership for choosing weak military leaders resulting in a similar lack of separate sources of military advice. Paradoxically, Cohen praises Rumsfeld for making a similar choice of compliant military leaders types in Myers and Pace, claiming that the Secretary had simply “acquired confidence in the senior military team that would conduct the war.”<sup>105</sup> Feaver also condemns the Goldwater-Nichols Act as silencing the built-in institutional check that interservice rivalry brings to the agency theory of civil-military relations. In the case of Vietnam, there was interservice rivalry, but it was so pervasive that it prohibited the military’s advice from being heard due to the volume of dissonance between the services. However, Feaver’s theory is correct if examined in the light of the planning for the stability phase of OIF. Increased service rivalry could have possibly introduced an institutional check on the planning and raised red flags that the administration could not have ignored; however, the monolithic type viewpoint prohibited such an alarm.

This monograph examined three variables to determine if a deep understanding of them could help the military in getting their advice considered by political leaders when making decisions that affect military operations. Extensive combat experience of civilian leaders is not a determinate that greatly affects the system. Political expertise of military leaders is something that needs to be considered, dependant on the type of conflict being considered. In high intensity conflicts, political experience is not as vital as a conflict that is low intensity. The lower the intensity level of the conflict, the greater the political implications of the outcome, and the greater political acumen required by military leaders. Service parochialism must also be considered. A small amount of interservice rivalry increases the volume of the military’s voice, but a great deal of conflict inside the military will diminish it again. When determining how to get its advice heard, the military must take the level of service parochialism into account.

In the aggregate, politicians will only hear and listen to military leaders if several things manifest themselves simultaneously. First, regardless of the civilian leadership’s experience in the military, the political administration must respect military culture as suggested by Herspring. Second, military leaders must have political experience to understand the ancillary functions of irregular warfare as recommended by Janowitz. Finally, there must exist a service culture that is divided enough to offer different opinions and alternatives, but not so divisive that it appears ineffectual and incoherent as indicated by Feaver.

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<sup>105</sup> Cohen, *Supreme Command*, 235.

## Further Research

This monograph asserts that the lack of political experience in the military directly affects civil-military relations. In the two case studies examined here, the lack of political acumen contributed to a reduction in national security. This begs the question of why political expertise is lacking in military officers, and how to remedy that dearth. One hypothesis is that military officers are not properly educated in civil-military matters. Since the time that Huntington wrote *The Soldier and the State*, the military has embraced his concepts regarding the relationship that the military should have with civilian leaders. An alternate view would be to explore Janowitz' notions given the manner in which the military has been most used recently. However, there are cultural and institutional inertia barriers to such a dramatic change that education could play a large role in combating.

A second hypothesis is that the military in general, and the Army in particular, does not incentivize assignments that provide a political foundation for field grade officers. Few officers have the opportunity to serve in assignments in the Office of the Secretary of Defense or some other governmental agency, fewer still actually seek out such postings. Promotions are based on time with troops and, in the current era of persistent conflict, lack of troop-level combat time is a discriminator during the selection process. Great tactical leaders get promoted to an ever-increasing rank, only to find themselves in a political environment for which they are ill-prepared.

A career track that promotes officers who pursue politically-imbued assignments, coupled with a cultural shift from the current Huntingtonian philosophy may place the military in a better position to foster healthier civil-military relations and strengthen national security.

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